



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH
ALTAR SERVER TRAINING MANUAL

Thank you for volunteering to serve as an altar server for our parish. It is a very important job and we truly appreciate you sharing your time and talent with us.

Altar Server Procedures

Broken down into the two basic assignments:

- *Chair side (left as you process in)*
- *Cross side (right as you process in)*

CHAIR SIDE SERVER:

Introductory Rite

You will follow the server who is carrying the cross.

Once everyone arrives at the altar get the small binder that is behind the presider's chair and hold it up for the priest and deacon.



Liturgy of the Word

After the prayers have been read, the priest and deacon will sit down. Put the book back and sit down in the pew closest to the priest's chair.

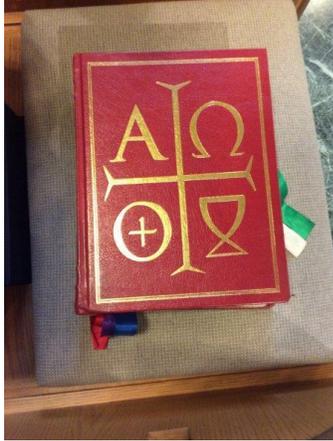
Readings will begin, gospel will be read, and homily will be given – stay seated. Remember to stand with everyone else when the Gospel is read. The Homily begins when everyone is seated again.

Once the homily is over, there is usually a several second pause, then the priest stands please stand and hold the small binder for the priest and deacon. This part will include the Nicene Creed and intercessory prayers.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

When the priest and deacon sit you will prepare the altar and then return to your seat. This includes:

- 1) *Sacramentary (big red book) located behind the priest's chair*



- 2) *Priest's Chalice/Purificator/Corporal/Paten (usually all together) and glass water pitcher (cruet) from the credence table*



After the gifts are brought to the altar, you should wait by the altar and take the water cruet from the altar back to the credence table when the priest or deacon is done with it. The priest or deacon may give you additional items like the pitcher that contained the wine.

GOTO All altar Servers....Page 5

CROSS SIDE SERVER:

Introductory Rite

Lead the procession down the aisle holding the cross.

Place cross in holder and go to your seat.



Cross Holder during Mass.

Liturgy of the Word

Remember to stand during the Gospel

The Liturgy of the Word ends after the Nicene Creed and Intercessory prayers

Liturgy of the Eucharist

When the priest sits and the collection begins carry the cross to the back of the church.

After the collection is completed lead the ushers and gift bearers to the front of the church and return cross to holder.

Go to the credence table and prepare for washing of the hands.

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ALL SERVERS:

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued from Above)

Stay at the credence table and assist with the washing of the hands. Pick up either the pitcher and bowl or the towel and wait for the priest to turn to you and then assist in the hand washing.

After the washing of the hands stay at the credence table until the Our Father. At that time, all of the servers should go to the altar and stand in a line, side by side, a distance behind the priest with arms outstretched and say the Our Father.

Then the priest will ask for the sign of peace and you will shake hands with the other servers and ministers on the altar.

The server near the chair should remove the sacramentary (large red book) from the altar and place it behind the priest's chair.

The Eucharistic ministers, deacon, and priest will prepare the altar. When the large communion plate is emptied, the servers will it back to the sacristy. The servers will then stand behind the Eucharistic ministers and receive Communion.

When the Eucharistic ministers, deacon, and priest leave the altar, the altar servers should clear the altar of the priest's chalice, paten and purificator and corporal and return to their seats.

After Communion the priest and deacon will return to their seats.

CHAIR SIDE SERVER:

Conclusion Rite

This server should get the binder and hold it for the priest. After prayers are completed put the binder back.

{MUSIC WILL START}

This server should stand in front (closer to the altar) of the server with the cross facing the altar.

Go to All Servers Below

CROSS SIDE SERVER:

Conclusion Rite

Stand when the priest/deacons stand and wait until they give the final blessing

{MUSIC WILL START}

This server should get the cross and stand in the middle aisle (about four pews from the first pew and face the altar.

Go to All Servers Below

All Servers:

The priest and deacon will walk to the front of the altar. When they bow, the servers should also bow, and when they turn around, the servers should also turn. All will proceed to the back of the church. The server with the cross will return the cross to its holder.



Mass is over - good job!

Appendix

Credence Table Setup at the start of mass.



At the top right of the table is a glass water pitcher (cruet) and the priest's chalice/purificator/corporal/paten. They are brought up when the altar is prepared.

At the top left of the left table are a metal bowl, metal pitcher and a towel. They are use when the priest washes his hands.

At the center of the table are the communion plates. Those are generally brought up by Eucharistic Ministers when they come up to the altar.

At the bottom of the table are the communion cups and purificators. Usually the deacon or a Eucharistic minister will bring them up as the altar is being prepared.

Sacristy – This is the area where priest, deacons and altar servers get vested. All this is where items for mass are setup and stored away.

This table has spare purificators and towels in the drawers. The drawers are labeled.



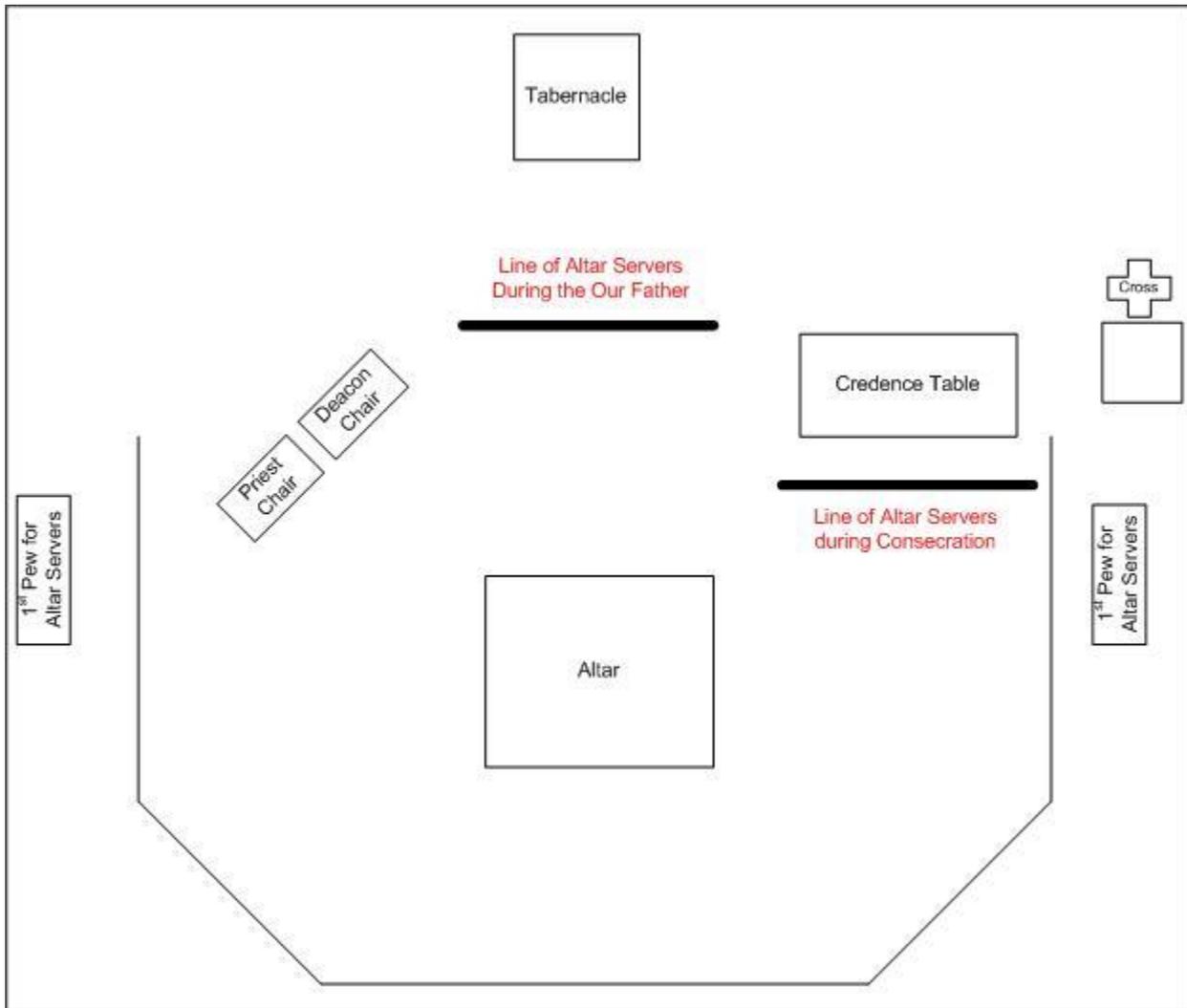
Altar Server Sign-in Book. *The folder with the black binding is for altar servers.*



Altar Server Vestments – *Right next to the sign-in book*



Bird's eye view of the Altar Area.



Good Practices:

- *Show up 10 minutes prior to the start of mass. Sometimes there are special instructions that the priest may need to give you prior to mass. It also gives you plenty of time to get ready.*
- *Pick a robe that is the right size for you.*
- *Wear nice shoes/sneakers.*
- *During the mass keep an eye on the priest in case he needs something from you.*
- *If you are at mass, but not scheduled, just check in to make sure there are enough servers or if they need a hand.*